



***OFFICE OF THE CHAIR
JOE A. MARTINEZ, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DISTRICT 11***

Memorandum

To: Honorable Vice-Chairman Dennis C. Moss and
Members of the Board of County Commissioners

From: Joe A. Martinez, Chairman



Date: June 30, 2006

Re: Response to the County Manager's Proposed FY 2006-07 Budget

Pursuant to Ordinance 02-128, I presented a memorandum outlining my recommended budget policies, expectations for the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget development process, and my Budget Message for fiscal year 2006-07 on February 21, 2006. To this end, I am now respectfully submitting my response to the County Manager's Proposed FY 2006-07 Budget which he released on May 31, 2006.

Proposed Budget

While I believe that this is a work in progress, I am confident that the County Manager will work closely with each and every Commissioner and Commission Committee Chair. Through such collaboration we will be able to adopt a responsible tentative millage rate in July and a fiscally prudent final budget in September.

I am supportive of many of the elements of the Manager's Proposed Budget, which have been developed consistent with the Results Oriented Government concepts we adopted last year. The recommendations are consistent with the County's Strategic Plan, the departmental Business Plans, and the issues raised by the Commission Committees and each of us.

There are targeted enhancements in the areas of public safety, transportation, and neighborhood services, to name a few, that will have a great impact on our community. This proposal strengthens our reserve levels, further improving the County's fiscal condition, and makes a slight reduction to the current millage rate.

Public Safety

I believe that we all support certain targeted service enhancements included in the budget. The Proposed Budget includes funding for six basic law enforcement classes and two classes for public service aides in the Police Department to allow for additional officers on the streets of the unincorporated area. I would ask that appropriate funding be allocated to fund the purchase of a much needed armored vehicle for the Special Response Team as requested in the departmental budget hearings and listed as a departmental priority. There is funding to implement the first year of a three year plan to improve the operations and maintenance of our correctional facilities and allow for improved training programs. Enhancements in the Corrections and Rehabilitation budget include additional security posts, fencing and other security-related capital projects; implementation of the Radio Frequency Identification pilot project; video surveillance improvements; increased maintenance staff; and resources and correctional officer training classes to allow for more aggressive recruitment. Also, included in the Proposed Budget is the first year operational support for the Miami Dade Fire Rescue Boat that I originally requested for the Seaport two years ago. Additionally, the department has been trying to expand the health and wellness program yet lacks funds to do so. I will be adding this priority to my Budget Message to be released prior to the second Budget Hearing in September. In addition, given the County's aggressive police and correctional officer recruitment plans, I am instructing the Manager to explore the feasibility of improving and/or expanding our law enforcement training capacity and facilities, including a comprehensive evaluation of the current MDPD Training Bureau location and the provision of in-service training for our departments, as well as other law enforcement entities in the region, at an alternate location.

The Proposed Budget includes adjustments to the emergency management functions to allow us to improve our disaster response. Other public safety enhancements include additional positions for the Animal Services Department, six new fire stations, four Advanced Life Support (ALS) fire rescue units, expanded hours for enhanced enforcement initiatives (EEIs) in the Police Department, and funding to reduce contractual payments made by the newly incorporated municipalities for specialized police services. The Proposed Budget also includes funding for local court system requirements certified by the Chief Judge pursuant to statute.

I would encourage the Manager, however, to reconsider the recommendation to reduce security at the entrances to the Stephen P. Clark Center. At a time when other local, state, and federal facilities are increasing the presence of security, it would send the wrong message to our employees that we eliminate the security screening posts in the lobby and enforce access control only for the second, third and twenty ninth floors. Selective enforcement of security measures is something I will not support.

Public Works/Environment (Enhanced Government Services)

The Proposed Budget includes \$5 million for new trees to restore our canopy to the level that existed prior to last year's storm season. There is funding to improve traffic flow in our community through intersection improvements, traffic signal synchronization, the repair and replacement of 50,000 traffic control and street signs, the installation of 430 illuminated street signs, the addition of a traffic signal maintenance and construction team, and the deployment of eight Neighborhood Enhancement Action Teams (NEAT Teams) that will provide a more rapid and proactive response to a variety of issues around our community, including small litter piles, downed signs, sidewalk repairs, and other neighborhood issues - "little things," that are very "big" to our residents. The Proposed Budget also implements improvements to the permitting process in all departments of the County's Building and Permitting Consortium, including Building, Environmental Resources Management, Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Water and Sewer, and Fire Rescue.

Cultural Arts

Other important enhancements include an additional \$1.5 million in funding for cultural programs and funding for the first full year of operations of the Performing Arts Center which will be completed by the end of the current fiscal year, the addition of three new libraries, two new bookmobiles, and seven new park and recreation facilities. These and other service enhancements included in the budget address issues that are important to our constituents.

Contingency Reserves

The County's reserves have been substantially strengthened as part of the Proposed Budget. By the end of FY 2006-07, the Countywide Emergency Contingency Reserve will exceed \$60 million.

The Fire Rescue District Emergency Contingency Reserve and the Unincorporated Municipal Service Area Contingency Reserve will be more than \$16 million and \$2 million, respectively, by the end of FY 2006-07. Reserves as a percentage of the entire general fund will improve from 4.3 percent to 5.4 percent. These actions will do much to ensure the County's fiscal stability.

Rate Adjustments

The Proposed Budget includes adjustments to both the Water and Sewer rates and the solid waste household collection fee. The increases to the Water and Sewer retail rates included in the budget are consistent with the maintenance index as approved by the Board last year.

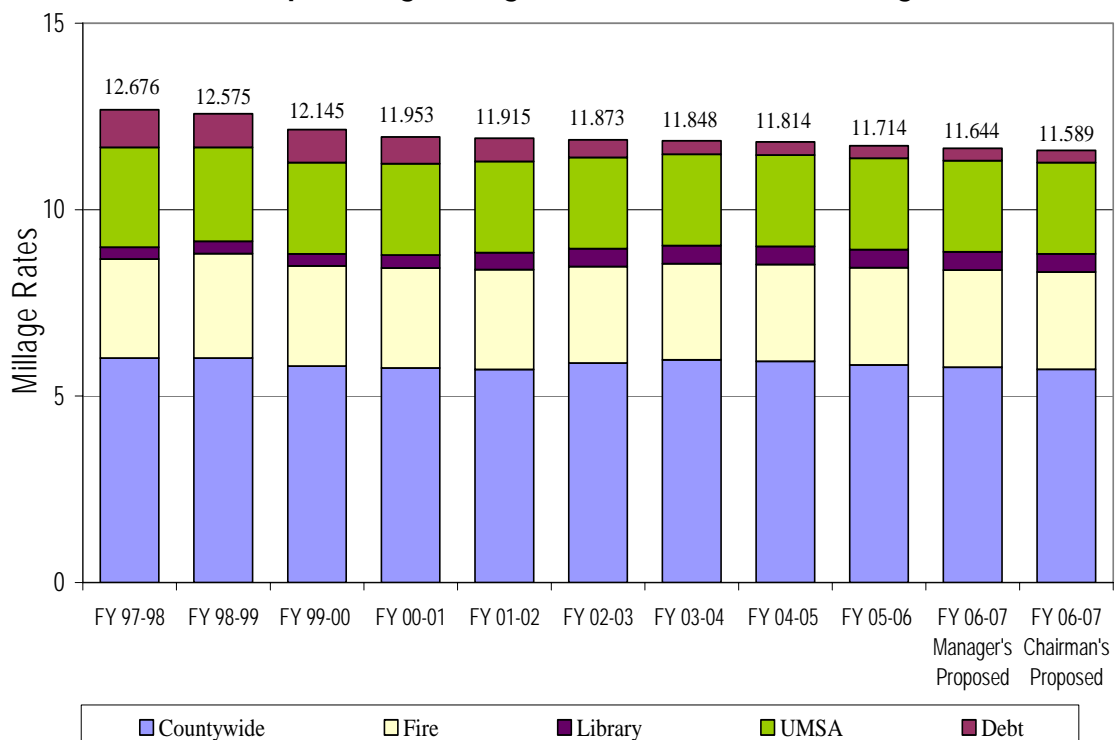
Wholesale rates have been adjusted employing the smoothing mechanism discussed during the approval of the FY 2005-06 rates. Any necessary changes as a result of the final report of the Rate Analysis project currently being completed by a consultant will be provided for Board consideration in September. This will support the ongoing operations and maintenance of the system, but we are aware that an extraordinary fee increase may be required in future years to address our capital needs including reuse and high level disinfection.

A \$50 increase to the solid waste household collection fee has also been proposed. I have already asked that the Infrastructure and Land Use Committee to develop a recommendation regarding this fee increase. At the June 26th INLUC meeting, staff presented additional information regarding this rate adjustment for consideration. The Committee will make a final recommendation at its July 11th meeting to be incorporated in the actions for the first budget hearing.

Budget Process and Recommendations

I am pleased that this year, as in previous years, the Commission Committees have been heavily involved in the reviews of the departmental budget issues as the Manager developed his Proposed Budget. As we found last year, the line item reviews by the Committees were very helpful throughout the process. The Manager and his staff will be making specific presentations at the July Committee meetings as will the Commission Auditor therefore providing more detailed information regarding the Proposed Budget for the Board to consider prior to adopting the tentative millage rates at the July 18th meeting.

Countywide, Fire Rescue District, Library, and UMSA Operating Millages and Voted Debt Millages



The Proposed Budget includes a slight adjustment to the combined millage rates of 0.07 mills. The proposed millage rates are 5.775 mills for Countywide, 2.609 mills for the Fire Rescue District, 0.486 mills for the library system, and 2.447 mills for the Unincorporated Municipal Service Area. The budget was predicated on the June 1st property tax roll estimate, which anticipated growth of 19.2 percent. The Certified Tax Roll is now available and the growth is actually 21.36 percent. As summarized in the table below, I propose that this growth be used to further reduce the countywide millage rate by an additional 0.055 mills for a total reduction of 0.125 mills from the FY 2005-06 adopted millage rate which would represent an approximate savings of \$15.00 per household. With this millage reduction, an additional \$8.534 million becomes available within the countywide general fund. At this point, I am recommending that this additional resource be placed in a reserve to address critical and extraordinary needs such as the Children's Courthouse or the law enforcement training needs mentioned above and/or additional tax rate reduction. Additional revenue generated in the other taxing jurisdictions under our control (Fire Rescue, Library, and UMSA) should be placed in a reserve for service or capital needs that may be identified in the future.

MILLAGE TABLE			
Taxing Unit	FY 2005-06 Actual Millage	FY 2006-07 Proposed Millage Rates in Book	FY 2006-07 Chairman's Proposed Millage Rates
Countywide Operating	5.835	5.775	5.720
Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Service District	2.609	2.609	2.609
Miami-Dade Public Library System	0.486	0.486	0.486
Total Millage Subject to 10 Mill Cap	8.930	8.870	8.815
Unincorporated Municipal Service Area (UMSA)	2.447	2.447	2.447
Sum of Operating Millages	11.377	11.317	11.262
Voted Millages -- Debt Service			
Countywide	0.285	0.285	0.285
Fire Rescue District Special Obligation Bond	0.052	0.042	0.042
Sum of Operating and Debt Millages	11.714	11.644	11.589

The rates in the table above should be considered a ceiling and I challenge the Manager to find further reductions to allow for increased tax savings for our property owners, specifically senior citizens and other property owners for whom tax relief was unsuccessfully sought at the State level during this last State legislative session.

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I plan to work closely with the County Manager and his staff over the summer to carefully review the entire Proposed Budget. As I did last year, I will be preparing a budget message to be transmitted to the Board for approval in September outlining my recommended adjustments and further reductions to the Proposed Budget. I look forward to working with each of you in an effort to ensure that the budget we ultimately adopt meets the needs and concerns of the citizens of our county.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the County Manager, Jennifer Glazer-Moon and all of the staff of the Office of Strategic Business Management for their commitment and continued dedication in the preparation of the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget.

If you should have any questions please contact me at (305) 375-5511.

JM/jim

Cc: Honorable Mayor Carlos Alvarez
Honorable Joseph P. Farina, Chief Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit
Honorable Harvey Ruvlin, Clerk of the Courts
George Burgess, County Manager
Murray Greenberg, County Attorney
Javier I. Marques, MS, Chief of Staff, Office of Chairman Joe A. Martinez
Jennifer Glazer-Moon, Director, Office of Strategic Business Management
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor